From:	Alex Safian
To:	Ascolese , Liana
Subject:	RE: The Israel/HP issue coming before the Council
Date:	Tuesday, April 17, 2018 11:47:09 PM

Hi Liana:

Thanks -- and if you have any questions after reading it over, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Alex

>>> "Ascolese , Liana" <lascolese@cambridgema.gov> 4/17/2018 4:06 PM >>>

Hi Alex,

It was great speaking with you this morning as well. I will read all of this over and make sure that your points are communicated to Councillor Mallon when she gets back. Thank you for sending this along, and if you need anything in the future, please don't hesitate to reach out any time.

Sincerely,

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From: Alex Safian [mailto:alexs@camera.org]
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 3:57 PM
To: Ascolese , Liana <lascolese@cambridgema.gov>
Subject: The Israel/HP issue coming before the Council

Hi Liana:

Thanks for calling me back, and it was good to speak with you this morning. Below are further details about what we discussed. I'd be happy to answer any questions, and thanks for getting this to Councillor Mallon:

A. Issues relating to HP and Israel

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is one of the major backers of the effort to boycott HP for various reasons, including HP's involvement in Israel, and they and their allies have filed multiple FOIA requests under Israel's Freedom of Information Act. What they found unintentionally does great damage to their argument for boycotting HP or HPE.

The document outlining their findings is here, and commentary followed by key excerpts is below:

1. AFSC acknowledges the split in HP, and the further spin-offs from HPE into independent companies, including DXC. They further acknowledge that DXC now handles most of the business with Israel that supposedly violates human rights and justifies a boycott. So why aren't they instead calling for the boycott of DXC?
Probably because DXC doesn't make consumer products and so few have even heard of them:

> Hewlett-Packard Company, the original company that is now defunct, has worked closely with the Israeli military and several Israeli authorities on a wide range of occupation-related projects at least since the 1990s. Many of these were transferred to HP Enterprise after the 2015 split, and some are now handled by DXC Technology. It is the responsibility of HP Inc. to respond to public concerns and clarify the scope of its current involvement in each and every one of these. As the legal successor of Hewlett-Packard Company, HP Inc. also has an obligation to remedy harms created by its past involvement.

They say it's HP's responsibility to clarify the current scope of their work in Israel, but has the city council asked HP about this? And has the council asked representatives from Israel about this? Why are they asking the council to boycott first and ask questions later? This seems very irresponsible.

2. Israel's population registry: Transition from Digital Equipment Corporation to Compaq to HP to HPE to DXC:

> In the 1990s, the Israeli Ministry of the Interior launched the Aviv Project to modernize the computerized database that contains its population registry. The company that was contracted to design the new database was Digital Equipment Corporation, which was later bought by Compaq, which in 2003 merged with Hewlett-Packard Company. In 2008, Israel launched the Arbel project, to add biometric data of Israeli citizens into the population registry. The company that was contracted to implement this project was Electronic Data Systems (EDS), which in 2008 was bought by Hewlett-Packard Company. Beginning in 2013, Hewlett-Packard Company employees have been stationed at system terminals located in Israeli government buildings in order to provide technical assistance to Israeli government employees. In addition, In 2008, Hewlett-Packard Company also started producing biometric ID cards for Israeli residents, including Israeli citizens, Israeli West Bank settlers, and Palestinian residents of occupied East Jerusalem.
>
> In 2015, these contracts were transferred to HP Enterprise, and **they are now in the hands of DXC Technology**. (emphasis added)

So again, if they really want to boycott a company for this, why isn't it DXC?

3. Israel is no longer using one of the main systems that the proponents cite to argue for a boycott of HP:

> HP Inc.'s legal predecessor, Hewlett-Packard Company, held a contract with the Israeli Ministry of Defense for the maintenance of the **Basel system, a biometric access control system** that uses hand scanners and facial geometry to identify Palestinians and control their passage through Israeli military checkpoints in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Israeli system of checkpoints and discriminatory permits violates multiple international human rights and principles of international humanitarian law. The Basel System contract was handled by Hewlett-Packard Company until its 2015 split, when it was transferred to HP Enterprise. In response to a WhoProfits freedom of information inquiry, the **Israeli Ministry of Defense stated that the Basel system was scrapped at the end of 2016 and is no longer active. The Israeli military designed a different system to replace it.** (emphasis added)

So if Israel is not even using these systems anymore, why are they trying to drag Cambridge into boycotting HP?

4. A major contract in Israel that HP previously held is now held by Cisco -- (again, so why target HP??):

> In 2011, Hewlett-Packard Company won a multi-year contract worth hundreds of millions of dollars to be the exclusive provider of servers for the Israeli military and other Israeli security forces. Following the 2015 split of Hewlett-Packard Company, this contract was transferred to HP Enterprise. This contract was repeatedly extended until 2017, when **Cisco won a bid to replace it**. (emphasis added)

B. Israel and the Palestinians

The pro-boycott moral and legal case is also full of holes. For example, the AFSC document includes false charges that the Israeli blockade of Gaza is illegal, and that Israeli settlements are Jewish only (there are Israeli Muslims and other non-Jews who live in Israeli settlements).

And of course, by omitting any mention of Palestinian terrorism, the boycott proponents seem to imply that Israeli efforts to try to protect their citizens from that terrorism, including non-violent measures like putting up checkpoints is, is illegitimate. But if Israel doesn't have the right of self-defense, then it doesn't have the right to exist either.

The pro-boycott side also omits any mention of US and Israeli peace offers that would have created a Palestinian state, which the Palestinians rejected -- as I mentioned, Israel and the Saudis accepted the Clinton Parameters in 2000 at Camp David, but the Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat turned them down.

The Saudi representative, Prince Bandar, told Arafat opposing the deal would be "a crime against the Palestinian people" and promised full financial and political support from Saudi Arabia.

Despite this, Arafat refused to accept the deal, went home, and started the Second Intifadah, in which thousands of Israelis were killed or wounded in suicide bombings -- on crowded buses, in shopping malls, in restaurants, outside schools among waiting parents and infants, etc.

Many of these attacks were far more deadly than the tragic attacks at the Marathon that we are now commemorating. You can imagine the impact this had on Israelis, politically and psychologically.

Despite this, in 2008 the Israeli leader Ehud Olmert made an even more far reaching peace proposal to the Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas (Arafat had died). Abbas refused to accept and didn't even make a counter-offer. He just walked away.

Please click here for further details on Israeli and US peace offers

The bottom line is that only by ignoring history and basic facts can one can support boycotting Israel because there is an "occupation" and no Palestinian state, or because there are checkpoints.

Without terrorism, there wouldn't be checkpoints, and had the Palestinians accepted President Clinton's peace plan the occupation and checkpoints would have ended 17 years ago.

Finally, I've also written an article with detailed refutations of the anti-Israel apartheid charges that are commonly repeated by those who support BDS - Deconstructing "Israeli Apartheid"

C. Further problems with the anti-HP case

According to the AFSC document another reason to boycott HP is the company's involvement in supporting the US government:

> As of 2015, Hewlett-Packard Company was ranked 41th on the list, making a $2 billion profit that year from military contracts. Most of these contracts are **now in the hands of DXC Technology**. Additionally, HP technology is used in specific weapon systems, such as the THAAD missile system.

So again DXC, not HP. And THAAD stands for Terminal High Altitude Area Defense -- it's a defensive weapon meant to shoot down incoming ballistic missiles. If, for example, North Korea fired a nuclear tipped missile at Alaska or other parts of the US, it's the THAAD that would play a major role in trying to shoot it down. And Raytheon, a MA company, is a major subcontractor.

Why would anyone want to boycott HP (or Raytheon) if they are helping with the THAAD -- are the boycott proponents in favor of the US getting hit by nuclear missiles?

D. Major political leaders have opposed BDS

Secretary Hillary Clinton

- "BDS seeks to punish Israel and dictate how the Israelis and Palestinians should resolve the core issues of their conflict. This is not the path to peace." - July 2, 2015 (In a letter to Haim Saban)
- "We have to be united in fighting back against BDS." - March 21st, 2016 (speech to AIPAC)

Secretary John Kerry

- "In order for Israel to continue thriving economically, we must also stand together and with a single voice reject arbitrary and unwarranted boycotts of Israel," Kerry will tell the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's (AIPAC) annual policy conference on Monday evening. -3/3/2014
- https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4486995/john-kerry-opposes-boycotts-israel -Same quote within the first two minutes of the video.

Congressman Joe Kennedy

- "Congressman Kennedy firmly opposes the BDS movement which seeks to isolate and undermine one of our closest global allies." - Emily Kaufman, a spokeswoman for Kennedy. July 19, 2017

Governor Deval Patrick

- "I came here tonight to stand with my friends, to stand with my friends who are worried sick about their friends and their family, here and in Israel. ... And to stand with all of those who, like me, yearn for peace. Israel will endure and survive this, as scared and worried as we all are at this moment. Israel is timeless, it was meant to be, and she will survive.''-November 18, 2012. Deval Patrick addresses a crowd of 2000 at Congregation Mishkan Tefila.
- "It's a very, very fruitful — and tangibly so — relationship," he said. "The way to keep it going is to keep cultivating it." -May 28, 2014, Patrick on the economic relationship between Israel and Boston.

President Obama

- "I have directed my administration to strongly oppose boycotts, divestment campaigns, and sanctions targeting the State of Israel." - February 23rd, 2016

Rep. Richard Neal

- "I am opposed to international efforts that attempt to isolate, boycott and delegitimize the State of Israel." - July 21, 2017

Rep. Keith Ellison

- "I have long supported a two-state solution and a democratic and secure state for the Jewish people, with a democratic and viable Palestinian state side-by-side in peace and dignity," Ellison said, in an emailed

statement. "I don't believe boycotting, divesting and sanctioning Israel helps us achieve that goal." (11/22/2016)
http://www.startribune.com/rep-keith-ellison-tries-to-clarify-his-relationship-with-israel/402516305/

Senator Bernie Sanders

- Asked by [an al Jazeera interviewer] whether he "respected" BDS as a legitimate nonviolent protest movement, Sanders said, "No, I don't." The senator suggested in his reply that the tactic was counterproductive as a means of bringing the sides to peace talks.

  "People will do what they want to do, but I think our job as a nation is to do everything humanly possible to bring Israel and the Palestinians and the entire Middle East to the degree that we can together, but no, I'm not a supporter of that," he said. (5/4/2017)

Sen. Kamala Harris (as a candidate)

- The boycott, divestment and sanctions movement is based on the mistaken assumption that Israel is solely to blame for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The BDS movement seeks to weaken Israel, but it will only isolate the nation and steer Israelis against prerequisite compromises for peace. At a time when anti-Semitism is on the rise — especially in Europe — and the Middle East is growing increasingly unstable, I believe we should not isolate Israel, the only democracy in the region. (6/3/2016 -- link here)

Of course, The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. also spoke out in favor of Israel:

MLK

- "...Israel must exist, has the right to exist and is one of the great outposts of democracy in the world." - MLK
- "When people criticize Zionists they mean Jews, you are talking anti-Semitism." - MLK in Boston shortly before he was assassinated.
- "I was his lawyer and one of his closest advisers, and I can say with absolute certainty that Martin abhorred anti-Semitism in all its forms, including anti-Zionism." - Clarence B. Jones
- "He consistently reiterated his stand on the Israeli-Arab conflict, stating 'Israel's right to exist as a state in security is uncontestable." - U.S. Rep. John Lewis (D-GA)

Thanks again,

Alex Safian, PhD
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